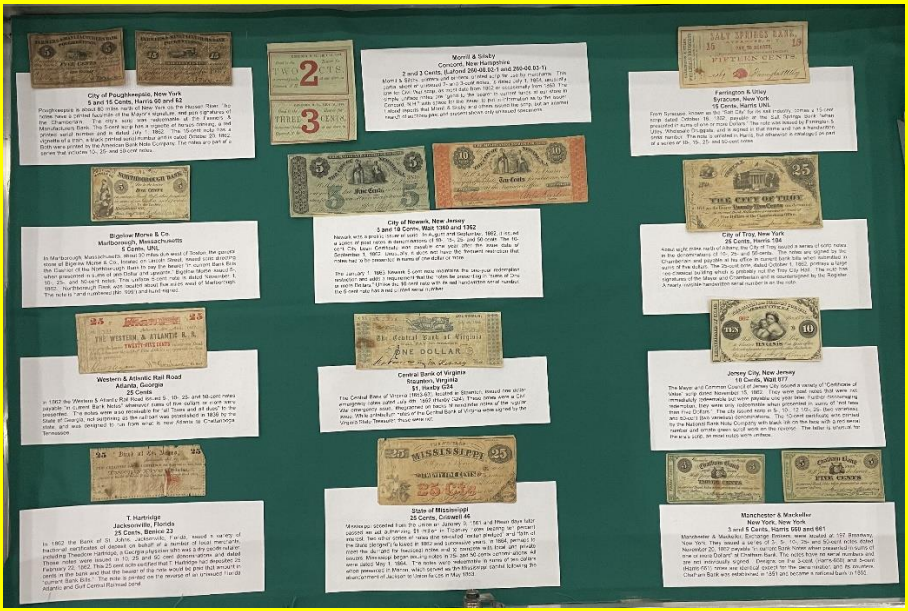
Maryland Numismatist

MSNA's Civil War Scrip Exhibit



MSNA Exhibit Results

Summer, 2025 Volume 53 – No. 2

The Maryland State Numismatic Association, Inc.

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http://MSNAonline.org

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The Board of Directors of MSNA is composed of the officers, past presidents and club representatives as listed to the right.

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President's Message

As you read the Maryland Numismatist you will see that we have added several new, national numismatic firms to our advertiser supporters. Heritage Auctions, the largest collectibles auctioneer and third largest auction house in the world is now advertising in our journal. Also, the Greysheet, owned by Whitman, and Great Collections is now an advertising partner. The Greysheet and its wholesale pricing for U.S. coins and currency is a trusted and authoritative source for coin pricing. Great Collections is the ANA's official auctioneer.

Speaking of Whitman, MSNA had its annual exhibition at the Whitman Baltimore Show from March 27-29, 2025. Our long-time relationship with Whitman allows us to do this, and we are thankful for our excellent connection with this fine show. We had six outstanding exhibits, up from four last year, and MSNA had an educational display of Civil War scrip from its John B. Henry Collection. See elsewhere in this issue for descriptions of the exhibits and pictures of the award presentations. You have been able to read about that scrip in several articles that have been published in the past issues of our journal, and more articles are in the works. One of the exhibitors was a Young Numismatist, showing that the hobby has a future with the next generation. Given the difference in my age and that of the YN, that's another generation removed, so an even brighter future.

As is becoming a tradition, I was one of the exhibitors, with two cases on "Thomas Macdonough, Hero of the War of 1812." And as the tradition, my exhibit failed to be one of the winning exhibits, but no matter, I garnered a participation award. I urge you to find some things in your collection that excite you and prepare an exhibit. Our next exhibition will be at the March, 2026 Whitman Baltimore Expo, so you have plenty of time to plan and prepare.

We are also in the process of creating an on-line presence through the assistance of a high school student intern working on her student service learning requirements. She has been helping design our website, www.msnaonline.org and our social media pages on Instagram and Threads (both @MSNAonline), and Facebook (Maryland State Numismatic Association). Like and follow us! (*continued on page 6*)

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(*continued from page 4*)

Through a chance meeting at the December 2024 Vienna Coin Show, I made a connection that led me to giving a presentation at a small club in Parkville, just northeast of Baltimore. If your club would like a presentation from the MSNA, contact us at MSNAonline.org@gmail.com. We have presentations on colonial Maryland currency ("From Loyal Colony to Independent State"), Civil War scrip, or brewery tokens from the Civil War and beyond.

Happy Collecting,

Ken Swab

Correction

In the Autumn 2024 issue, the article, *Some New York Scrip of the Civil War*, incorrectly stated that Clyde, NY, is midway between the north end of Cayuga Lake and Lake Erie. Clyde is midway between Cayuga Lake and Lake Ontario.

MSNA will Pay for Articles

To encourage submissions of articles to the *Maryland Numismatist*, MSNA will pay $50 for any article written by anyone other than an MSNA officer or the journal editor and published in the journal. The article must not have been published elsewhere. While articles about Maryland topics are preferred, any article on a numismatic topic will be considered. Contact the editor at JoyousLion@gmail.com for more information about submitting articles.

HR 595

This bill amends the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act to make it easier for collectors and traders to import numismatic materials while still preventing the import of potentially illegally excavated items. Specifically, importers can now provide declarations under oath stating that the numismatic material was lawfully acquired and exported, is a known type documented in reference works, and is not the result of illicit excavations. The bill also limits customs officers' ability to request additional documentation. Contact your Representative to request they support HR 595. For more information, contact PKT@PKTCounsel.com.

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MSNA Exhibit Results

The MSNA again sponsored exhibits at the Whitman Spring Coin Expo March 27-29. This year, we had six exhibits, the most since 2016. We also had two first-time exhibitors, one of whom was a young numismatist. Michael Shutterly returned after a seven-year absence. He won first place at the MSNA exhibit competition in 2016 through 2018.

MSNA Life Member Michael Shutterly received the first place award (tenth-ounce American gold eagle) for his exhibit "In the Beginning… When Man Created Coins." This exhibit shows some of the earliest electrum pieces, and won second runner-up for Best of Show at the ANA's National Money Show in 2023.

MSNA Editor and Treasurer Simcha Kuritzky won second place (a tenth ounce platinum koala) for his exhibit "Collecting Israel Commemoratives by Series." This exhibit took third place in world coins at the FUN show in January.

Gerald Grzenda won third place (Mexico 2 peso) with his exhibit "Coinage of the German Colonies," which showed coins minted under German authority for German East Africa, German New Guinea, and Kiau Chau from 1890-1916.

MSNA President Ken Swab won fourth place (a slabbed silver American Eagle) for his exhibit "Thomas Macdonough." This was related to his exhibit last year on the Battle of Plattsburg in 1814, as Macdonough commanded the U.S. forces on Lake Champlain.

New member Eric Holzman received a MSNA silver ounce 1988 medal for his exhibit on German notgeld collected by his ancestor before emigrating to the U.S.

Drew Meyers is our first Young Numismatist exhibitor in decades. He won an Axumite bronze coin from the fourth century for his exhibit on ancient Roman coins.

This issue of *The Maryland Numismatist* contains two articles based on exhibits at the Whitman Spring Expo. Eric Holzman's notgeld was inherited from his grandfather, Erich Holzmann, who collected them as a young man in Germany during the notgeld period. Drew Meyers' exhibit consisted of two Roman Imperial coins, and he gives a brief overview of Roman history.

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German Notgeld of the Early 1920's

By Eric Holzman

Notgeld (pronounced note-geld) were emergency currency issued by German cities during World War 1 and the early years of the Weimar Republic, from 1914 to 1923. Initially, notgeld were intended to alleviate local cash shortages. After the War, as popular collectibles that mostly originated in German rural areas and small towns, they became a source of income for municipalities. Until hyper-inflation took off in 1923, notgeld denominations varied from 25 pfennig (quarter mark) to a few marks. Designs became increasingly elaborate as they included references to local culture (see Figure 1), national history (see Figure 4), and German politics (see Figure 3). Some notes promoted local tourism or functioned as advertisements for local industry. Many displayed implicit and explicit political messages, mostly conservative in tone.

As a harbinger of Germany's future, the imagery and texts on notgeld in the early 1920's reveal a society that was deeply unhappy with its defeat in the Great War. Some featured gloomy images lamenting the post-war settlement and allusions to an alleged lapse of contemporary morals. Some called for a revision of the Treaty of Versailles. Other notes imagined violent punishments for supposed profiteers and individuals deemed lacking in solidarity towards the national community. These themes appealed to notgeld collectors, who often came from the educated middle class, were economically vulnerable to the rising inflation, and increasingly culturally pessimistic.

(a) (b)

Figure 1: (a) front of a 50 pfennig notgeld issued by the city of Bayreuth on October 22, 1918. (b) back features Bayreuth's famous opera concert hall.

Notgeld became very popular during what numismatists call the Collectible Period, which spanned 1919 to mid-1922. Many towns found themselves in financial difficulties, so they issued notgeld as souvenirs

like postcards, hoping that collectors would not exchange them for regular money. These years produced the most diverse range of notgeld, often with creative, colorful designs. Over a thousand places in Germany issued notgeld, and these are widely collected today.

"O'Kitzingen, you lovely little town, your butterfly tower on the Main is crooked, your Franconian girls are lovely, and your Franconian wine is classy."

(a)

1914: "I once sold butter, eggs and poultry with much effort."

1920: "Now the hoarder comes out into the country and grabs the goods out of my hand."

(b)

Figure 2 shows a typical notgeld from this period, with a quaint saying about Franconian women and wine on the front, and a complaint that hard work in 1914 has been replaced by hoarders who steal in 1920.

Many notgeld were issued in Schleswig, a historic and cultural region on the southern part of the Jutland Peninsula north of Germany's Eider River. It encompasses the northern half of the Schleswig-Holstein state in Germany and the Sønderjylland region in Denmark. Schleswig became a duchy of Denmark in the 12th century and remained a Danish fief until it was forcibly annexed by Austria and Prussia following the 1864 war. After the Seven Weeks' War in 1866, Schleswig was incorporated with Holstein as a single Prussian province.

"Voucher for one Mark"

"Schleswig and Holstein forever undivided"

(a)

"We don't want to be Danes"

"We want to remain German"

(b)

Figure 3: (a) Front of a Plebiscite-themed, 1 Mark notgeld issued by the Municipality of Süderbrarup. (b) Back features pro-German sentiment.

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In a 1920 plebiscite held in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, the Northernmost part of Schleswig voted to join Denmark, while central Schleswig voted to remain in Germany. The plebiscite was popular as a subject for notgeld that were printed in Schleswig. The notes often were explicitly nationalist on one side (either pro-German or pro-Danish) and more neutral in tone on the other side (see Figure 3). The demand from collectors and people who had participated in the plebiscite drove up the prices for these notes.

The 1864 war between the German Confederation and the United Monarchy of Denmark, fought over the rightful allegiance of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, inspired nationalistic notgeld. Prussia and Austria began the war against Denmark on 1 February 1864. After losing the decisive battle of Als, the Danes, panicking and despondent, requested an armistice. At the ensuing peace negotiations in Vienna, the Danes were forced to sign the peace treaty unconditionally, which meant they lost the whole of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenborg, and thus the United Monarchy of Denmark was dissolved. Figure 4 shows one notgeld from a series of eight notes issued by the Municipality of Süderbrarup, celebrating the Prussian storming of the Düppel entrenchments near Sonderburg (Denmark) on 18 April 1864.

(a)

(b)

Figure 4: (a) 50 pfennig notgeld celebrating the Prussian victory over the Danes in 1864. (b) Prince Friederich Karl of Prussia (4th from right) and his staff pose before the destroyed Düppeler Mill. April 18, 1864

Pro-Danish notgeld, such as those shown in Figures 5 and 6 were also printed in Schleswig. Most of the notgeld seem to have been printed by German printers, who willingly printed notgeld for both sides of the referendum to maximize their profit.

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Figure 5: Two famous finds from Danish prehistory are the Golden Horns, formed from sheets of gold about 400 CE and decorated with both Nordic and Roman motifs. The long horn, shown on this notgeld, was found in 1639 in Southern Jutland.

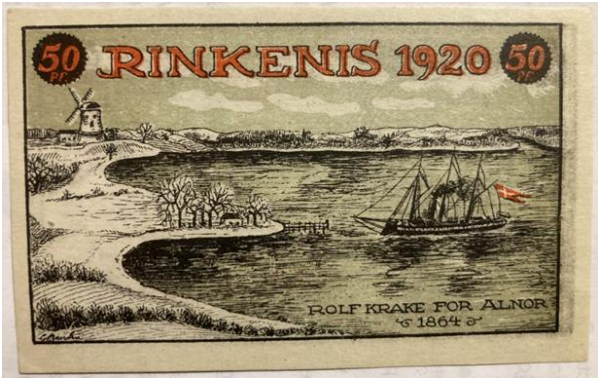

Figure 6: The Rolf Krake, a Danish turret ironclad built in Scotland in the 1860s, was the first Danish all-iron, steam-powered vessel. It was the first warship of any navy to carry a turret designed by C. P. Coles, a pioneering naval architect.

Notgeld often featured unique local stories, myths, and even songs. The four notgeld in Figure 7 tell a whimsical story from the town of Apolda called The Old Women's Mill Folk Tale. The Mill looked like a large coffee grinder that was cranked at the bottom by two men. Old, unhappy women (notgeld "B") visit the mill (notgeld "C"), and climb a ladder to the top (notgeld "D"). The men would crank the mill, and when the women reappeared at the bottom they would be rejuvenated (notgeld "E").

B. "No man wants to know them; they are getting older and more grim.

C. "There they go with the right feeling to the Old Women's Mill of Apolda.

Figure 7: The Old Women's Mill folk tale from Apolda

D. "They enter with fear and trepidation. Even Schnauzer, the dog, longs for youth.

E. "Now they are again young girls. Also, Schnauzer stretches his rejuvenated limbs.

The text appearing on the notgeld in Figure 7 is written in the Fraktur script, which dates from the early 17th century. Named "Deutsche Schrift" by its originator, Hieronymus Andreae, Fraktur comes from the Latin word "fractura" and means "broken" or fractured" in that the gothic-like flourishes in the letters break up the words. In 1871, when the German Reich was established, Fraktur became the standard script for all government publications.

While Fraktur script can be challenging for non-Germans to read, the language is standard German. Other dialects, so different from standard German that they are indecipherable, appeared on some notgeld issued by municipalities around the North Sea. Figure 8 shows two such notgeld issued in Keitum, a village on the North Sea island of Sylt in Schleswig-Holstein.

Standard German:
"Voucher Keitum a Sylt"
North Frisian:
"Wide Heart - Clear Horizon"
North Frisian:
"Come Rain / Come Shine
Come dark or happy times / we stay with
Sylt; we remain loyal to being folks of Sylt!"
GUTSCHEIN KEITUM A SYLT
RUM HART-KLAR KUMMING
50 Pf
ÜS TERP HER SKIEL
DIAROM MAKI WÜ JIL!
Kumt Riin / Kumt Senenskiin
Kum junk of lekeik Tiren /
Tö Söl'wi hual' Aural ;
Wü bliv truu Söl'ring Liren!
1M
GUTSCHEIN KEITUM A SYLT
North Frisian: "Our village, therefore, welcomes you!"

Figure 8: Schleswig-Holstein notgeld written in the North Frisian dialect.

By the end of 1922, the rate of inflation had begun to increase dramatically, bringing with it the end of the Collectible Period. Notgeld

returned to being primarily an emergency currency as it was during the War. As hyperinflation took over, small town printers struggled to keep up with the rapidly deflating mark. Figure 9 shows a 5 million mark notgeld, printed on one side only, issued at the end of September 1923 by Apolda, the same town that had issued the Old Women's Tale Series (see Figure 7). Two months later, when Germany's Reichsbank halted hyperinflation by ending the monetization of Government debt and replacing the Papermark with the Rentenmark, the days of notgeld essentially were over.

Figure 9: 5 million mark notgeld issued by Apolda on September 25, 1923, just two months before the Reichsbank ended hyperinflation.

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National Money Show Results

The American Numismatic Association (ANA) held their National Money Show (NMS) in Atlanta February 27-March 1, the same city it was held in immediately before the COVID shut-down.

MSNA Life Member Michael Shutterly received the Best of Show award at the ANA's National Money Show for his exhibit "It's Elementary." His exhibit "Heavenly Gold" took runner-up Best of Show.

MSNA Editor and Treasurer Simcha Kuritzky won first place in History for his exhibit "Paleo-Hebrew in Israel's Money and Medals," first place in Geography for "The Vermont Catamount," and first place in The Arts for "Israel's Money and the Question of Idolatry." His exhibit on the Branch Davidian Depression-era scrip won third place in Economics.

Michael Shutterly also gave a talk on medieval coins portraying Mary, mother of Jesus. This was also the subject of an article by him that appeared in the April, 2024 issue of *The Numismatist*.

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Ancient Rome History & Numismatics

By Drew Meyers

Ancient Rome existed from 625 BCE to 476 CE. The Roman empire grew to include territories in three continents, and with expansion came growth of goods, trade, and wealth. The use of money and coins developed over time as Rome's domains grew.

Rome started as a kingdom. Between 625 and 510 BCE, six Kings reigned. Then the Romans founded the Republic based on a constitution that helped establish rights and privileges of Roman citizens. During this period, Rome grew in size and advanced its military and goods production.

Republican Rome lasted from 510 to 31 BCE. There were no longer kings and the government was ruled by the upper class and knights. In 451 BCE, the Romans created the Twelve Tables which is a code of basic laws and rights that were previously unwritten. In 51 BCE, Julius Caesar conquered Celtic Gaul (modern France), expanding the Roman Republic beyond the Mediterranean.

The last period of ancient Rome was Imperial Rome from 31 BCE to 476 CE. The first emperor was Augustus Caesar in 27 BCE. In 117 CE, the Roman Empire was at its largest geographically, reaching across three continents: west Asia, north Africa and most of Europe. In 286, the Roman Empire was split into the Eastern and Western Empires.

In Ancient Rome there were numerous forms of currency that developed into coins because it was too hard to trade one object for another of equal value. Most coins were minted out of gold, silver, copper, bronze, or orichalcum (brass). The first coins were made in 326 BCE to represent consistent value for trade. Additionally, coins were used as a media to show what the emperor looked like. The silver denarius was the principle silver coin for the Roman Empire.

The minting of coins came under the supervision of three junior magistrates, and initially depicted classic images of the gods Roma, Jupiter, Mars, and Victory, before they started depicting the Emperor. They stamped the coins by placing a planchet between precut dies and hit the top die with a heavy hammer. This was all done by hand, and they produced millions of coins each year.

Below is a small bronze coin of Constantine II who ruled from 337-340 CE. The coin displayed here was issued between 317 and 337 when he

was Caesar. On the obverse is a bust of Constantine II. The obverse is inscribed CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C. In English, "Constantine the younger, most noble Caesar." The reverse depicts a gate to show protection for the people, and two beacons that could be used as a signal, and a star above. The reverse carry's the inscription PROVIDENTIAE CAESS, in English, "The provident Caesars."

Constantine II was born in 316, and died in battle against his brother Constans in 340 at the age of 24. Constantine II and his two brothers divided the empire. When Constantine II was 13, he beat the Alemanni in modern-day Germany. He and his two brothers divided up the empire when Constantine II was 21 years old. Constantine II ruled Britain, Gaul, and Spain. Constantine II bossed his youngest brother Constans and took several regions of Africa from him. Constantine II attempted to invade Italy that Constans ruled, but Constans' army killed Constantine II in battle in 340, and Constans took all of Constantine II's land.

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Above is a silvered bronze antoninianus (double denarius) from the reign of Probus. We know it was struck in 276 CE, because it has the letters IMP with no Roman numerals following, which means it was struck in the first year of the Emperor's reign. The obverse of the coin depicts Probus facing left with a torch further to the left, almost touching the inscription IMP C M AVR PROBVS PF AVG. The translation is "Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius Probus, Pius Felix, Augustus" which is his noble or full name followed by the descriptors pious and happy, and the title August. The reverse of the coin depicts a radiant god driving a four-horse chariot, with the inscription SOLI INVICTO, meaning "the unconquerable or invincible sun."

Marcus Aurelius Probus was born in 232. When he was 25, he joined the Roman army. When Emperor Tacitus died in 276, Probus became the next Roman emperor. He reigned from 276-282. During his reign, he resettled barbarian tribes defeated by Rome into the Roman empire so they could join the army (in exchange for land), and thereby strengthen the empire. He spent some of his time as emperor defending the Roman empire from invaders in moder-day France, southern Germany, the former Yugoslavia, and Egypt. He died in 282 at the hands of either angry soldiers, or by soldiers that sided with Carus, his successor. Carus had not ordered the assassination, and punished the culprits.

Welcome New Members

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859 Drew Meyers
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[Editor's Note: This is the seventh in a series of articles profiling the various member clubs of MSNA.]

MEMBER CLUB PROFILE
COLONIAL COIN CLUB

By Betty Meck, CCC Historian

On March 19, 1963, 25 coin collectors assembled to form a coin club in Annapolis, Maryland. Since there was a great deal of coin history in Annapolis dating back to colonial times, it was decided to name the club "The Colonial Coin Club" (CCC). Jim Hirtle took over as acting President, and with the able guidance of Swallow, set as the club objectives to: provide educational programs on numismatics, encourage and promote interest in numismatics, cultivate friendly relationships among collectors and students of numismatics, and encourage and assist amateur collectors in the field of numismatics. Knowledge is power, and educating members on various aspects of coin collecting and numismatics has been a key function of the Colonial Coin Club for over half a century.

In June 1968, the Colonial Coin Club became an ANA member club. In 1972, John Henry of the CCC helped create the Maryland State Numismatic Association, and served as its president in 1972 and 1973. The secretary and treasurer during those years were also members of CCC. Another very active member of our club – and a past president, Henry Westphal, also served with distinction as President of MSNA. CCC became a life member of MSNA in 2005.

The club uses the Chalmers shilling of 1783 as their logo. John Chalmers minted these coins when the Continental Congress resided in Annapolis.

Have Fun with Common and Scarce Indian Head Cents

By Mark Benvenuto, MSNA #R825

Aficionados of early U.S. copper know very well how much fun the Indian Head cent series can be. Issued from 1859 to 1909, these coppers are collected in virtually every condition. Even worn pieces in G-4 receive a certain amount of attention from collectors, though some are made into jewelry. Those in the various grades of mint state are eagerly and avidly collected. So it might be an interesting exercise to see just what we get, and what we have to pay for, when looking at the most and the least common of the Indian Heads.

Finding the most common Indian Head cents poses no real problem. In 1907, the main Mint in Philadelphia pounded out more than 108 million. That's a rather impressive number, especially considering that the entire United States population in 1910 was 92,228,496 people. But there are other hefty numbers as well. The years 1901, 1903, and 1906 all had tallies close to the nine-figure mark. Even years as far back as 1863 saw almost 50 million. With production numbers like these, it's no surprise that common date Indian Head cents with a bit of wear on them are quite inexpensive. In grades up to EF-40, they can be obtained for as little as $10 each. Here the challenge is finding what dates have the smallest mintages, yet are still coupled to these attractive prices. This alone could be a worthwhile undertaking in building a collection of these old coppers.

For those of us who wish to go to higher grades, it's worth examining the list of mint state Indian Head cents in any standard reference carefully. Here is where the prices really seem to jump, and not because mint state Indian Head cents are rare. It is probably fair to claim that the higher cost associated with mint state grades, be they brown, red-brown, or still sporting some Mint luster, is not just rarity. It is that the collector desire for them has simply increased a lot over the past few decades. The idea of filling collector books with dates at any grade has given way to a search for the highest grades possible. So a 1907 costs $10 in EF-40 but $150 in MS-64. It's also most likely the reason that the price jumps from that just-mentioned $150 in MS-64 to a whopping $600 in MS-65.

Okay, if common date Indian Head cents are generally coupled to attractive prices, let's see how much we'll have to grit our teeth for the least common ones. We're going to ignore that odd beast which is a die

variety and concentrate on the 1877, 1908-S and 1909-S. First, we'll make the controversial statement that the 1877 is not really rare at all. Yes, it has a mintage of less than one million among a sea of dates which have mintages in the tens of millions. But a total of 852,500 coins does not the proverbial rare date make! It seems that the hundreds of dollars we'll have to spend even for an example with some wear on it is just the bad luck of folks believing this key date is actually a rare one.

Next, the 1908-S. The San Francisco branch Mint just started pounding out base metal coins like the Indian Head cents in 1908 (the V nickel would have to wait until 1912), and to be fair, they did a pretty good job of it, hammering out a bit more than 1.1 million. But the price tag here is based on the coveted 'S' mint mark. We in the collector community have a decades-long love affair with 'S' marked coins. And thus, even though there are more than a million of these, we'll need to pony up at least $100 for a decent looking example.

The final year of the Indian Head cents – and the first year of the Lincoln cents – saw two key dates come out of the gate in San Fran. The 309,000 Indians that were made with that desired 'S' means that this will qualify as a key date in the series, no matter what. Is it worth something like $400 in good, or G-4, condition? We'll leave that up to each collector.

When comparing common and key date Indian Head cents, it's worth adding one last point of comparison. For virtually every year of issue, there were a few thousand proofs minted. Choosing just one, the 1909 saw a proof issue of 2,175 pieces. Keeping in mind the cost of a 1909-S, what might we guess the cost of a 1909 proof in PF-64 might be? How about $500? Yes, we have the choice of a 1909-S key date for $400 in G-4, or a 1909 PF-64 for $500. Really? This shows that proof Indian Head cents is very much a niche market, overlooked by the mainstream collectors.

We've just seen that there are some neat possibilities among the Indian Head cents, be they common, scarce, or proof. The best of luck to any of us who decide to get into, or back into, the fun of these classic cents.

photos courtesy *coin auctions help.com*

Local News

The **Washington Numismatic Society's** March meeting featured President **Simcha Kuritzky's** talk on the significance of 3 1 4 Pi Day and the numeric value of the Biblical Divine Name Shaddai. The April meeting featured a video on coin dealers' favorite coins or banknotes. The May meeting had attendees talk about alternative hobbies they are active in. The June 17 meeting will be the semi-annual pot-luck dinner.

In March, the **Montgomery County Coin Club** (MCCC) MSNA President **Ken Swab** spoke about Civil War-era and later brewery tokens. In March, MSNA past President **Jack Schadegg** held a team knowledge competition, where the audience was grouped into four teams and the group came up with the answers to a question. One of the questions was, what coin had thousands minted but only one was officially monetized and released to the public? MSNA Treasurer **Simcha Kuritzky** not only knew the answer was the 1933 double eagle ($20 gold piece), but he had attended the auction at Stack's the day before the 2002 ANA convention started in Manhattan and witnessed the monetization. In May, **Jack Schadegg** read aloud a MCCC bulletin from 1960, the second year of the club, pointing out how much has changed in the last 55 years.

At their March meeting, the **Oak Crest Village Coin Huskers** (successor to the Harford Coin Huskers) listened to a talk by MSNA President **Ken Swab** on Civil War-era and later brewery tokens.

Coin Club Meeting Calendar (most months)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
First				Baltimore
Second	Cambridge, Colonial	Montgomery, Oak Crest, Western Maryland	Belmar, Middle River, Catonsville	
Third	Colonial (sometimes), Bel Mar	Washington Numismatic Society	Bowie	Baltimore
Fourth	Carroll County		Middle River	

What's Your Sign?

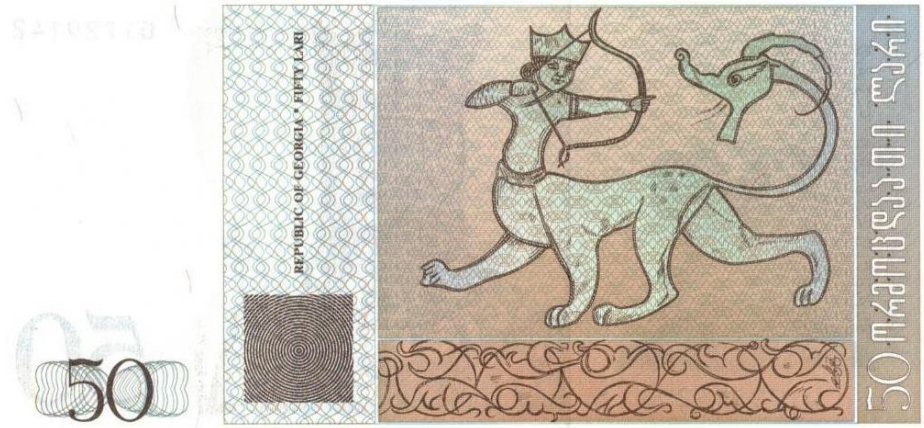
Part Sixty: Zodiac on Paper Money

by Simcha Kuritzky, NLG

I have written about zodiac-themed coins, both ancient and modern, as well as medals, bullion, and pendant jewelry, but one significant area of numismatics I haven't yet touched upon are banknotes. There aren't many banknotes with zodiac-related designs, but given the larger surface area and use of color, these designs can be more intricate and full of history.

At a coin show recently, I saw an exhibit on the Educational series of U.S. notes from 1896. The $2 bill shows five allegorical figures. Science, seated in the center, presents the two young children of steam power and electricity to the adult woman of commerce and industry. The hem of science's skirt shows the zodiac figures of the Gemini twins, Cancer the crab, and Leo the lion. Presumably the other nine signs are on the parts not visible.

A similar tiny design appears on the Austrian 100 schilling banknote of 1946, right after Austria got back her independence from the Third Reich. The central design shows the Academy of Sciences building in Vienna, and near the four corners are symbols of the Eye of Providence, balance scales, a cup, and a zodiac wheel. The wheel only shows the 12 sigils, with Aries at 4 o'clock and the rest going clockwise. Superimposed over, and partially obscuring, the wheel are a floral design and a pale pentagram.

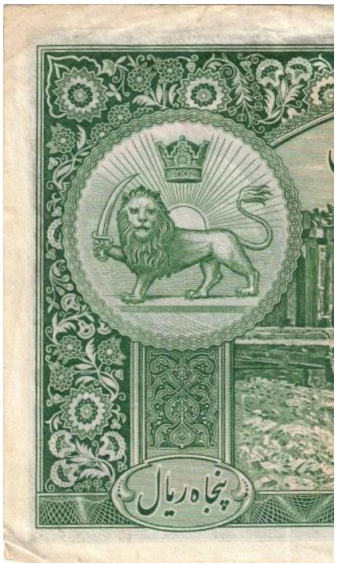


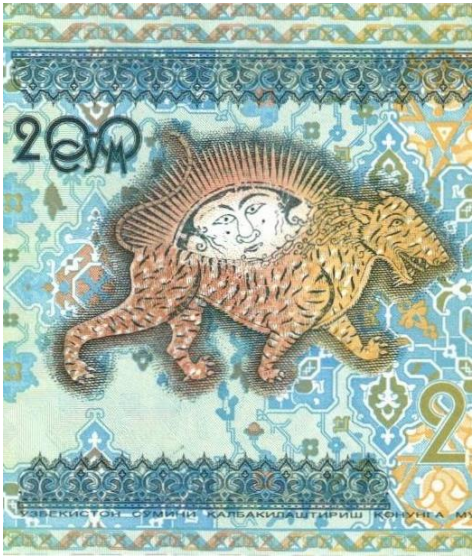
The Republic of Georgia got back its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Since 1995, the 50 lari banknotes have a portrait of Sagittarius as half leopard rather than half horse. The dragon head as part of the centaur's tail takes a bit of explaining. In addition to the two luminaries and five planets that can be viewed with the naked eye, the Hindus added two planets representing the points in the moon's orbit where it crosses the ecliptic, or the path of the sun. The place where the moon rises in the sky is called Rahu or the dragon's head, and the one where the moon sets is called Tehu or the dragon's tail. If the moon is full when it reaches either node, a lunar eclipse will occur, and if it is new, a solar eclipse will occur. The nodes are about 173.3 earth days apart. The note reproduces a Seventh Century CE Georgian miniature that describes how the dragon's tail node sits at the edge of the Sagittarius constellation.

The Egyptian £10 of 1974 shows as part of its design the Dendera zodiac, found on the ceiling of an ancient temple in Egypt. The North Star sits in center, while around is the Mesopotamian zodiac, depicting the solar eclipse of 51 BCE and the lunar eclipse of 52 BCE, when Egypt was under Greek Ptolemaic rule.

Poland honored Copernicus on their 1000 zlotych notes of 1962-5 and 1975-82. The Polish astronomer published his book describing the sun-centered universe in 1543. This is where we get the term "revolutionary" to mean something dramatically new, because he claimed the earth revolved around the sun as opposed to the ancient Ptolemaic model that had the sun revolving around the earth. The 1965 banknote shown here has a diagram of the earth (4 circles showing day and night on different parts of the globe) going around the sun, with the other planets in their orbits, all surrounded by the ecliptic represented by the zodiac signs. The figure on the 1975-82 banknotes don't have the zodiac and represent the planets by their sigils.

Italy's 200 lire note of 1976 shows Galileo Galilei on the front, best known for his discovery of Jupiter's moons. The back has a fancy sky map, with the zodiac going around in an oval including both the Latin name and symbol. In the center are two sky maps, of the Northern and Southern hemispheres. The zodiac signs can be seen near the edges. At bottom are symbols of the planets. Galileo got in trouble with the Catholic Church for ridiculing their continued use of the Ptolemaic model, and spent his last years under house arrest.





Most collectors have seen Iranian or Persian coins with the lion and sword design, but how many realize this symbolizes the zodiac sign of Leo? The radiant sun behind is included because that "planet" rules over him. The version shown at left is from a Persian 50 rials of 1939. In some versions, the sun has a face. The design on the Uzbek 200 som of 1997 shows Leo as a tiger with a large sun face behind, from a mosaic on the Sher-Dor Madrasah portal at Registan Square in Samarkand.

I haven't shown the Oriental zodiac much, but this banknote from Macao in 2022 shows a floral tiger design for Year of the Tiger and the 12 zodiac signs represented by their Chinese character in the center. This is part of an on-going series of notes with a different animal each year.

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Maryland Coin Show Dates

All shows have free admission. Only the Whitman show does not have free parking.

14 June – Baltimore Stamp & Coin Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Mosner Miller Bldg., 2200 York Road, Timonium, MD; 9-4.

19-21 June – Whitman Baltimore Summer Expo, Baltimore Convention Center, 1 West Pratt Street; Thu 2-6, Fri-Sat 10-6, Sun. 10-3.

24 Aug. – Hunt Valley Coin and Currency Show, Embassy Suites, 213 International Circle, Hunt Valley, MD; 9-4. (410) 929-8178

4 Oct. – Baltimore Stamp & Coin Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Mosner Miller Bldg., 2200 York Road, Timonium, MD; 9-4.

26 Oct. – Hunt Valley Coin and Currency Show, Embassy Suites, 213 International Circle, Hunt Valley, MD; 9-4. (410) 929-8178

6-8 Nov. – Whitman Baltimore Winter Expo, Baltimore Convention Center, 1 West Pratt Street; Thu 2-6, Fri-Sat 10-6, Sun. 10-3. MSNA will hold its annual meeting at this show.

15 Nov. – Cambridge Coin Show, American Legion Post 91, Sunburst Highway (Route 50), Cambridge, MD; 11-5. (443) 515-0311

6 Dec. – Baltimore Stamp & Coin Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Mosner Miller Bldg., 2200 York Road, Timonium, MD; 9-4.

7 Dec. – Hunt Valley Coin and Currency Show, Embassy Suites, 213 International Circle, Hunt Valley, MD; 9-4. (410) 929-8178

Northern Virginia Coin Show Dates

26-27 July – Annandale Coin Show, Nova Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, VA; Sat 10-5, Sun. 10-4.

2-3 Aug. – Vienna Coin & Stamp Show, Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna, VA; Sat 10-6, Sun. 10-4.

18-20 Sep. – VNA Coin & Currency Show, Expo & Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver Pkwy, Fredericksburg, VA; Fri 10-6, Sat 10-5, Sun. 9-3.

1-2 Nov. – Vienna Coin & Stamp Show, Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna, VA; Sat 10-6, Sun. 10-4.

MEMBER CLUBS IN GOOD STANDING (* denotes charter)

Baltimore Coin Club * P. O. Box 43681 Baltimore, MD 21236 (410) 284-8382	Cambridge Coin Club P. O. Box 932 Cambridge, MD 21613 umesgrad@gmail.com
Bowie Coin Club P. O. Box 913 Bowie, MD 20718-0913 bowiecoinclub.com bowiecoinclub@verizon.net	Carroll County Coin Club* % Lester A. White 10 West Main Street Westminster, MD 21157 Les.white.1@juno.com
Catonsville Coin Club 517 N Chapel Gate Lane Baltimore, MD 21229 PMTimmel@verizon.net	Colonial Coin Club * 3015 Love Point Road Stevensville, MD 21666 bettymeck@aol.com
Maryland Token & Medal Society P. O. Box 28253 Parkville, MD 21234 mdtams.org leonard_cicero47@verizon.net	Montgomery County Coin Club P. O. Box13504 Silver Spring, MD 20911 mococoinclub@gmail.com
Oak Crest Village Coin Huskers c/o Don Curtis 8810 Walter Blvd, Apt. 2229 Parkville, MD. 21234 donaldleocurtis@gmail.com	Pennsylvania Association of Numismatists 1985 Lincoln Way Suite 23 #225 White Oak, PA 15131 www.pancoins.org
South Glen Burnie Coin Club % Darrel King 8017 Clark Station Road Severn, MD 21144 sgbcc.com	Washington Numismatic Society P. O. Box 13504 Silver Spring, MD 20911 wns.anaclubs.org JoyousLion@gmail.com
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